INDIAN LEGENDS in RHYME

GRACE PURDIE MOON

Illustrated by KARL MOON

(For description of this book see front wrapper-flap)

INDIAN LEGENDS IN RHYME

By GRACE and KARL MOON

"Now out in the desert so far away,
The animals lived in a little town
Whose houses were built of sticks and clay
And painted an earthen, dusty brown."

Stirring old legends of the land of the Navajo told for children in poetry and pictures of unusual quality. The stories were gathered at first hand from the Indians of the southwest. They tell of the Bobcat who lost his tail, of the coyote, who comes prowling about the camp at night when the fires have died down, of the little Indian brave, and of life in the ancient adobe villages. And through the stanzas there runs the old spell of silent, dim-aisled forests where it takes the trained ear of the Indian hunter to detect the sounds of living things.

The poems are short and for the most part narrative, with a lyrical quality which will make them easily memorized. Though they are woven about a far-off magical country, they keep very close to the intimate interests of childhood—the love of animals and Indians, the spirit of play and adventure.

The multitude of pictures in color and in black-and-white are done from life and are an integral part of the book.

Illustrated in color. Cloth, 4to, net $1.50

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INDIAN LEGENDS IN RHYME

A LEGEND OF LONG AGO

INDIAN LEGENDS IN RHYME

BY

GRACE PURDIE MOON

ILLUSTRATIONS AND DECORATIONS BY

KARL MOON

TORONTO

THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
How the Bob-Cat Lost His Tail	1
The Hunter	11
The Ride	12
My Burro	13
The Bunny	14
The Sky Tepee	16
The Hare	16
The Star-Babies	17
Hunting Song	17
There Was a Young Brave from the West	18
The Coyote	19
When the Sun Goes Down	20
The Dancing Lesson	21
My Pony	22
The Drum	22
Old Brother Fox Goes A-Hunting	26
The Owl	26
Prairie-Dog Town	26
Twilight Thoughts	27
How Brother Coyote Found His Voice	28
The Medicine-Man	38
Camp-Fire Tales	38
Old Brother Fox	39
The Runner	41
The Eagle	42
The Harvest Dance	43
The Flute-Song	45
The Spring	47
Little Snake	49
The Harvest Dance of the Underground	50
The Navajo Shepherd-Boy	53

ILLUSTRATIONS

A Legend of Long Ago . . . . . *Frontispiece*

PAGE

The Hunter 10
The Ride (*in Colors*) 12
My Burro (*in Colors*) 14
The Dancing Lesson (*in Colors*) 20
The Drum 23
"Gone are the Days When It Called to Kill" . . . 25
Painting the Buck-skin 29
The Medicine Man (*in Colors*) 38
The Runner 40
The Flute-Song 44
"Come, Little Son of Mine" 46
"Haste, for the Shadow of Evening Falls" . . . 48
The Navajo Shepherd-Boy (*in Colors*) 52

How the Bob-Cat Lost His Tail

THIS is a legend of long ago;
Come, little brother, come close and hear
A tale of the land of the Navajo,
With its purple buttes and its air so clear,
The dusty sage and the pinyon tree,
The tiny homes of the desert folk;
Where Brother Coyote runs swift and free,
With a wary eye for a hogan's smoke.

Now out in the desert, so far away,
The animals lived in a little town
Whose houses were built of sticks and clay,
And painted an earthen, dusty brown.
Remember that this was long ago,
When beasts and men one language spoke.

(The wise men say this still is so
In the desert towns of the animal folk.)
The animal folk lived free from care,
And worked and sang the long days through,—
The wolf and the rabbit, coyote and bear,—
And never a moment's discord knew.

But one there came to this peaceful camp,
And no one asked him or wanted him there,
For he was a meddlesome, haughty scamp,
Who made only enemies everywhere.
He burned the medicine hogan down,
And stole the paint and the sacred meal.
In the dead of night he'd rouse the town,
And precious treasures from each home steal.
He burned the fields of ripening maize;
He drove all the horses far away;
He thought of a hundred wicked ways
To frighten and harm them night and day.

This was the lynx; but at that time
A long and beautiful tail he wore,
And many a story and many a rhyme
Had been written about it in days before.
But now he was hated by great and small;
They longed to punish and kill him too;
But this was voted, by one and all,
Hardly the possible thing to do,
For there was a secret he kept full well—
A magical power, an evil charm,
That guarded his life so none could tell
The possible way to do him harm.

So early and late they thought and they thought,
How they could punish him—what to do!
What was the charm of this magic they fought?
Who of them all could furnish a clue?

Old Father Bear was their ruler then,
And just and wise was his rule, and kind.
He called together the wisest men
To see what remedy they could find.

O'er many a pipe they nodded until
One of their number briefly spoke;
His voice in the silence sounded shrill,
And the others peered through the haze of smoke:
"Out on the edge of the desert," he said,
"A medicine-man lives all alone;
The wisdom of ages, living and dead,
He mingles with wisdom of his own.
Brother Coyote is swift and sure;
We'll send him out to this ancient man,
And HE will suggest the wisest cure
For all of our trouble—if ANYONE can."

And so when the sun went down that night,
And over the hilltop, bright as day,
Came peeping the moon with mellow light,
Brother Coyote sped swift away.
With the speed of the wind he loped along,
Over the hills and rocks and sand,
And as he ran he sang a song,
A song of the hunt and the desert land:

"Bring me my pony and arrows and bow!
The desert is calling, and gladly I go
To hunt for the deer or to hunt for my foe;
It matters but little—I go, I go!
I'm off for the desert, Ho-ho! Ho-ho!
I'm off for the desert, Ho-ho!"

On he ran, through wood and through dale,
And never a moment stopped for rest
'Til the purple sky grew wan and pale,
And the sun peeped over a hilly crest.
Then there before him a wonderful sight
Brought his speed to a pace more slow;
For spread before him in rosy light
The Painted Desert lay far below.

In a tiny hut on a jutting ledge,
In the shade of a twisted pinyon tree,
Right on the desert's very edge,
Lived the wise old man he had come to see.
And now in the door of his hut he sat,
And smoked and nodded and smiled and thought,
And found an answer to questions that
Many a wise old man had sought.

He raised his eyes to the trail, at last,
That twisted back up the mesa's wall,
Where a tiny speck was coming fast,
But seemed to the wise old sage to crawl;
For well he knew who the comer was,
And why he came, and the need of speed,
And he knew the lynx as the evil cause,
And he knew the waiting villages' need;
So, turning into the hogan door,
He reached for his bags of colored sand,
And kneeling down on the beaten floor
He spread them out with careful hand.

An old, old song he chanted low,
As on the floor the picture grew,
And into the door with steps now slow
Brother Coyote came into view.

The wise old man then rose and said:
"Brother, your errand is known to me,
But wisdom greater than my old head
Must give the answer, but we shall see."
Then down he took from the dusty wall
An ancient rattle of tortoise-shell,
And into the fire let gently fall
Some incense powder of fragrant smell.

Then walking slowly, with stately grace,
He circled the sandy-pictured floor,
And chanting low with a solemn face,
He shook the rattle o'er and o'er.
Then carefully placing a woven mat
In the midst of the brightly colored sands,

Down on the pictured floor he sat,
And bent his face o'er his folded hands.
Long he sat, and the silence grew,
And Brother Coyote began to yawn;
He stretched and wriggled and sighed some, too,
And wondered how much of the day had gone.

Finally, then, the old man said,
As he raised his ancient, wrinkled face:
"This is the message that I have read
In the painted sands by the spirit's grace:
'TO TAKE FROM THE LYNX HIS POWER FOR BAD,
ROB HIM OF THAT HE LOVES THE BEST.'
And that," he said, with a look half sad,
"Is all we are told. You must learn the rest."

And Brother Coyote, with thoughtful brow,
Turned to the hogan's open door,
And breathed in deeply, for he must now
Speed swift away up the trail once more.

And again in the camp did the council meet,

And deeper still was the mystery now,
And every wise man took his seat
With a puzzled look on his thoughtful brow.
The lynx was caught, and they'd chained him, too,
In the strongest house there was in town,
But every man of the council knew
He'd free himself when the sun went down.
For that was the strength of his magic spell—
Nothing could hold him when darkness came;
Locking the door or tying him well,
Chaining him down—it was all the same.

And now he sat on the sandy floor,
And his evil face wore a wicked smile
As he said to himself the words once more
He'd heard before but a little while:
"TO TAKE FROM THE LYNX HIS POWER FOR BAD,
ROB HIM OF THAT HE LOVES THE BEST.
Ah," he muttered, "that makes them mad!

Surely, the wise one spoke in jest.
How could they know that the thing I love"
(And he gave his beautiful tail a pat)
"Everything else in the world above
IS YOU, and, my beauty, they'll NEVER guess that!"

But near the lynx, in a cold gray heap,
The ashes lay of a fire long dead,
And buried under their softness deep,
A little horned-toad on the sandy bed.
And bright were his eyes as the stars at night,
And sharp his ears as the cactus spear;
And he saw the lynx in the fading light,
And every word did his sharp ears hear.

So out he crept on his noiseless feet,
And swift he ran to the council, then,
And never a soul did the horned-toad meet
'Til he came to the lodge of wise old men.

And then indeed was excitement keen
When, raising his voice so small and shrill,
He told them all he had heard and seen
Of the rascal who'd worked so much of ill.
And over the town the news so good,
Carried by shout and cry and call,
Spread like fire in an autumn wood,
And carried it's joy to one and all.
Then pulling the lynx by his silky tail,
They dragged him into the public square,
And paying no heed to his angry wail,
They chained him down to a tree-stump there.

And old Father Bear with a sharpened stone
Cut off his tail with a single "whack,"
And the BOB-CAT slunk with a savage groan
Into the forest—and never came back!

"THE HUNTER"

The Hunter

HOW quiet the woods!—yet the hunter's
trained ear
Can all through the forest so many sounds
hear:
The soft gentle coo of the wild doves at night;
The padding of foxes; the deer's footstep light;
The whir of the woodcock that rises in flight;
The small chatter made by the squirrels in fright;
The *swish* as the rabbit slips by through the grass;
The murmur of leaves as the summer winds pass.
How quiet the woods!—yet the hunter's trained ear
Can all through the forest these tiny sounds hear.

The Ride

CLICKETY-CLACK, clickety-clack;
Out on my pony, and now that I'm back
I'll tell you the things that I saw on the road:
A prairie-dog town, and a little horned-toad
A lizard asleep on a rock in the sun,
He jumped as we passed him, and how he did run!
A herd of wild deer that flew by swift as light;
A coyote gray that was soon out of sight.
When taking a trail down a sheer canyon wall
We had to go slowly for fear of a fall,
And far down below we could see the bright gleam
Of Mata-watoba, the swift little stream.
And high up the cliff, hardly seen from below,
An eagle had built where no hunter could go.

If YOU'D take that trip, with my father to guide,
With my eyes to see things, my pony to ride,
I know what you'd say—that the cities could go,
You'd live as an Indian, whether or no.

Clickety-clack, clickety-clack,
Out on my pony and all the way back,
That's what I saw by the side of the road,
And all in the sunlight that sparkled and glowed.

"THE RIDE"

My Burro

YOU may think my burro stupid and imagine he is slow,
But he'd go as fast as any, if he only CHOSE to go,
And there are so many little tricks I've taught him how to do,
If he'd only ever do them—but he never chooses to!
Still I never really blame him for the things he tries to shirk,
For my burro isn't LAZY, but he simply HATES to work.

The Bunny

A LITTLE bun sat in the sun,
So happy and so warm;
He nibbled grass nor had, alas,
A single thought of harm.

But creeping quick, with rabbit-stick,
A little red-skin came,
And spying bun out in the sun,
He carefully took aim.

But bun had ears that had for years
Heard sounds the slightest made;
He ducked and ran and then began
A race through wood and glade.

"MY BURRO"

They ran so fast they were at last
So dusty, tired and hot;
The red-skin stopped, and bunny popped
Behind him like a shot.

The red-skin slept, and bunny crept
To safety far away;
But as he dreamed the red-skin seemed
To hear the bunny say:

"O little brave, I beg you save
Your rabbit-sticks for life
Of SAVAGE game, who are to blame
For all the war and strife.

"Our tender meat is good to eat,
But surely you can find
So much of food that's just as good
But of another kind.

"I wish you'd see that life to me
Is dear as yours to you,
And NEVER kill a bun until
The bunny ASKS you to."

The red-skin woke, and then he spoke
Both thoughtfully and slow:
"I'll maybe kill SOME game but will
Let all the BUNNIES go."

The Sky Tepee

IT seems to me the sky at night,
So full of friendly stars that peep,
Is just a tepee o'er us spread
To keep the light out as we sleep.

The Hare

LITTLE BROTHER of the plain, swifter than the air,
O be careful as you run; of the hawk beware!
Eagle-eyed he watches you, Little Brother Hare,
And the fox is watching too from his hidden lair;
O be careful as you run, Little Brother Hare.

The Star-Babies

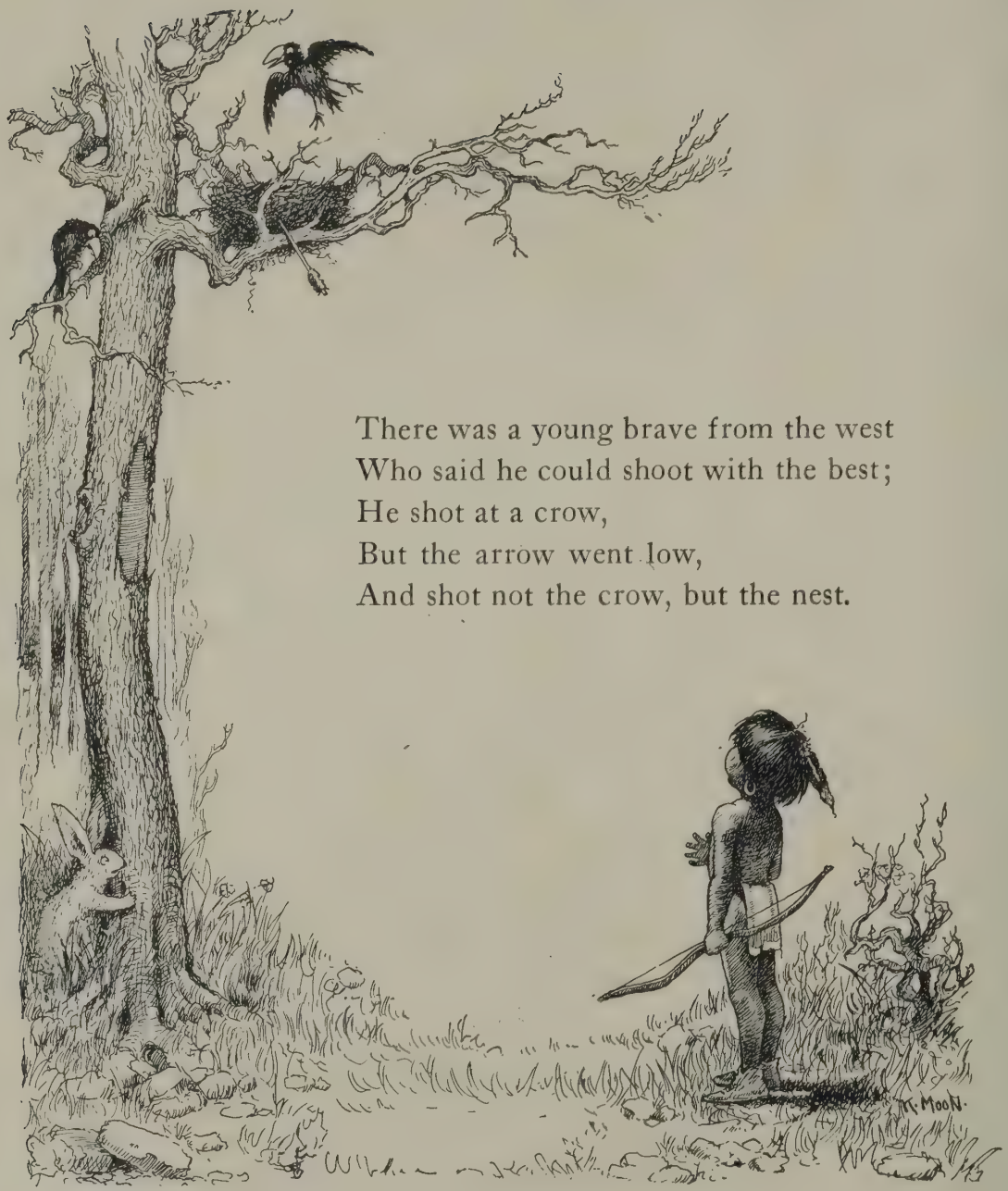
IN the little rain pool
When the nights are cool
Like bright, silver leaves the star-babies float;
And the crickets peep,
And the frogs croak deep,
As each star-baby rocks in his tiny boat.

The night-wind's croon
Is a drowsy tune,
And the star-babies soon are fast asleep;
'Til the sun's first ray
Brings the peeping day,
And the star-babies back to their sky-home creep.

Hunting Song

HO! heigho! with my arrows and bow,
I'm off on a hunt and I hunt high and low;
The fox and the hare and the greedy black bear
Had better watch out, for I hunt everywhere;
I've an eye on the hawk in the sky overhead,
And the little black snake in his warm sandy bed.
Ho! heigho! with my arrows and bow,
None can escape me wherever I go.

Sing a chant of feathers worn by brave red men,
Father went to battle and never came back again.



There was a young brave from the west
Who said he could shoot with the best;
He shot at a crow,
But the arrow went low,
And shot not the crow, but the nest.

The Coyote

HE'S scared to come around the camp when
it is light;
He always waits until the fire is out at
night;
And then he creeps, and nearer creeps, a shadow gray;
And yelps and howls to try to scare the dogs away;
He yelps so loud and fast I always think a pack
Is round the camp, but when next day I find his track,
I see that he was prowling, hunting all alone,
Just peeking round to see if he could find a bone.
Brother Coyote, always wisely through the day,
Keeps quiet, and I only see him far away.

When the Sun Goes Down

WHEN the sun goes down in the glowing west,
And the world grows quiet and dark and cool,
All the day-people go to their sleepy rest—
From the deer and the hare to the fish in the pool.
But the night-folks wake from their long, day sleep,
And shake all the lazy dreams away;
The gray wolves prowl, and the crickets cheep;
The frogs croak loud with their voices deep;
The coyotes near to the hogans creep;
And the shadowy owls from their tree-homes peep,
And "whoo-to-whoo" in a doleful way.

Then the night-wind comes with a playful rush
And rattles the cones on the pinyon tree;
He shakes the dust from the mezquite bush,
And the sand whirls round in a dance of glee.
Then the fairy-folk from the under-ground
And the tiny elves from the Jack-oak trees,
And the animal folk from hole and mound,
Dance in great circles around and around;
While their fairy feet hardly touch the ground,
And their only music the singing sound
Of the cool and playful desert breeze.

"THE DANCING LESSON"

Wa'-ta, the fox-fairy, leads the dance,
And he skips and hops in the balmy air.
The horned-toad follows with bow and prance,
And he is the tiniest fairy there.
They dance 'til the moon grows pale in the sky,
And the east glows pink with the coming day;
Then the night-winds die with a mournful sigh,
And the fairy-folk and the animals fly,
With many a hop and skip and cry,
To their burrows low or their tree-tops high,
To sleep all the sunlit hours away.

The Dancing Lesson

A WARM and drowsy hush is over all,
As shines the noontide sun on 'dobe wall;
When through the pueblo streets is heard the thrum
Of old Pedro Kï-eé-te's ancient drum;
And singing too a childish voice is heard,
And pat of feet keep time with every word:
"Hi! Yi! Yi! and Ho! Yo! Yo!
Shake the rattle high, then low;
Pat the ground with buck-skin toe;
Standing straight and bowing low;
Sometimes fast and sometimes slow;
Back and forth and round I go."
And old men stop and nod and smiling say:
"He'll be the greatest dancer of our tribe some day."

My Pony

HE'S not so big or beautiful, but, oh, how he
can run;
It's always with my pony that I have the
greatest fun.

The Drum

COME, come, come,
Hark! Little Brother, the call
of the drum.
Out on the night when the air is
so still,
And the night-hawk sweeps
from the dark'ning hill,
And the shadows creep
From the land of sleep,
And the breath of the plains grows sharp and chill,
Come, come, come,
Hark! the call of the drum.

Come, come, come,
Hark! Little Brother, the call of the drum.
Long ago when the land was free,
And the Indian roamed from sea to sea,
His heart beat light
With the love of fight,
And it called to battle in savage key:
Come, come, come,
Hark! the call of the drum.

"THE DRUM"

Come, come, come,
Hark! Little Brother, the call of the drum.
Gone are the days when it called to kill;
Conquered the brave and broken his will;
Gone are the doe,
And the buffalo,
And the savage war-cry's hushed and still;
Come, come, come,
Hark! the call of the drum.

Come, come, come,
Hark! Little Brother, the call of the drum.
It calls to the dance at the break of day,
And the frolics and pranks of the clown at play;
The laughter and jest,
'Til the glowing west
Fades into the shadows of evening gray.
Come, come, come,
Hark! the call of the drum.

"GONE ARE THE DAYS WHEN IT CALLED TO KILL"

Old Brother Fox Goes A-Hunting

OLD BROTHER FOX went a-hunting one day;
(O, Little Hare, he is going your way!)
When the air was cold and the sky was gray,
(Hide! Little Hare, O, HIDE! I say!)
Old Brother Fox went a-hunting one day,
But the little gray hare was hidden away,
And old Brother Fox came back, they say,
And went without dinner that cold, gray day.

The Owl

OUT in the forest I hear him. Hark!
"Whoo-to-whoo"
He waits to call 'til the woods are dark;
"Whoo-to-whoo"
I'm scared when I hear his flapping wings;
It makes me think of such ghostly things;
It's old Brother Owl who weirdly sings:
"Whoo-to-whoo."

Prairie-Dog Town

THEY'RE big and they're little, they're fat and they're thin,
The people of prairie-dog town;
When they come to their houses and want to get in
They don't go UPstairs but go down!

Twilight Thoughts

DANCING shadows leap and fall
On the smoky tepee wall,
And I hear out in the night
Funny sounds that in the light
Never seem the same at all.

Seems so awful queer to me;
Often I have tried to see
What they are that softly call,
And come near the tepee wall,
But with daylight always flee.

Seems to me I hear them say:
"We are dreams from far away;
Little boys who'd like to be
Just a little red-skin free;
But we must go home by day.

"Underneath our fairer skin
We are just like you within,
And we'd like to live like you,
O'er the desert roaming too;
Little Brother, let us in."

But they will not come to me
When I call so tenderly,
When I open wide the door,
And make room upon the floor;
No, they never come to me
Though I call so tenderly.

How Brother Coyote Found His Voice

LITTLE CHIEF nodded, with heavy lids drooping,
And dreamily watched as his father, with care,
Sat painting the buck-skin, so carefully grouping
The bravest and boldest of battle-scenes there.

He watched 'til the colors so bright and so glowing
Seemed all of one hue through the haze in his eyes,
And just as his thoughts into dreamland were going
He jumped to his feet with a start of surprise;

For there in the door, where the shadows were playing,
Stood Brother Coyote, one paw in the air;
That beckoned and waved, in the sign-language saying
He'd come with a message to Little Chief there.

"PAINTING THE BUCK-SKIN"

His throat was bound tight in a collar of grasses,
And all he could say was a croak and a wheeze;
His dusty gray coat was in great shaggy masses,
And spattered with mud from his head to his knees.

Little Chief slipped past the door's swinging curtain;
And Brother Coyote, in sign-language plain,
Told how he had just lost his voice, and was certain,
With Little Chief's help, he could find it again.

Little Chief nodded, and quickly they started,
And Brother Coyote led straight to a mound
Of dusty gray rocks, where he cautiously parted
The sage-brush in front of a hole black and round.

Little Chief thought he could never get in it;
It looked very dark and it looked very small,
But Brother Coyote in less than a minute
Had whisked him straight in with no trouble at all.

The light was quite bright and they saw very clearly;
The passage was filled with a crowd of horned-toads;
Some coming, some going, and most of them nearly
Were hidden from sight by the size of their loads.

For every small back had a big bag to carry,
Of nuts and dry grains and some purple corn too,
And never a moment would one of them tarry;
For each had his work before winter to do.

And Brother Coyote to make the toads hear him
Just stretched out his arms 'til he barred the whole way,
And every horned-toad that came anywhere near him
Just HAD to stand still 'til he'd said his whole say.

"Has anyone here seen my voice?" he croaked, wheezing,
And most of the toads shook their heads, meaning "no,"
But one little toad, past his small brothers squeezing,
Came cautiously up with his bundle in tow.

And choosing a space for a moment to lean it,
He scratched his gray head for a second to think;
"Brother Coyote, it MAY be I've seen it;
Just what does it LOOK like?" he said with a wink.

As Brother Coyote stood humming and hawing,
There came a great clatter from all of the toads;
They shoved him aside with much pushing and clawing,
And went on their way with their little grain loads.

Little Chief waited, just bursting with laughter,
As Brother Coyote stood scratching his head,
And noticed that always, when asking thereafter
About his lost voice, "Have you HEARD it?" he said.

Then they went on 'til they came to a turning;
Where hung a big curtain across the whole way;
A little stick fire in a corner was burning,
That made the place cosy and bright as the day.

The curtain was painted with queer scenes of battle,
And Little Chief felt he had seen them somewhere;
The horses and men and the big sacred rattle,
The same that his father had painted, were there.

Then Brother Coyote and Little Chief waited;
They could not go farther, it seemed, than they'd come;
When all of a sudden a booming voice stated:
"You cannot go on 'til you've beaten the drum."

They both looked around in a manner uncertain;
When Little Chief suddenly threw back his head,
And there sure enough was a drum on the curtain
All painted a glowing and beautiful red.

He reached up his hand and tried gently to pound it,
And just as he did, to his startled surprise,
He saw a big nose and some ears coming 'round it,
And following close were a pair of big eyes.

And then in a second, a great horse appearing,
He motioned them both to get quickly astride;
And shaking his mane, with a stamping and rearing
He dashed with a rush to the desert outside.

"O HO!" sang the horse, "now watch my stride;
We're off on a gallop, we're off for a ride;
With the winds of the desert a race we'll run;
Through the dusty sage in the gleaming sun.
O, HI! YI! YI! and HO! HO! HO!
We're off on a gallop, AWAY we go!"

And then how they flew o'er the great sandy spaces;
O'er rocks, hills, and sage-brush the speed was the same,
And Little Chief thought of the swift pony races
They had in his camp when the harvest time came.

And on o'er the wide purple desert they hurried;
Toward the mouth of a canyon they saw far ahead,
And Little Chief felt rather shaken and worried;
"Now where do you think we are going?" he said.

The horse gave a snort, and he started to tossing
His long silky mane in a high, haughty way;
"Just wait 'til you see," and his manner was bossing;
"*I* know what you two are out hunting today."

Then into the bend of a small gully swinging
They galloped along through a little stream-bed,
And saw a great eagle in large circles winging
His graceful, slow flight in the blue overhead.

Then out from the mouth of the canyon came running
The dark, shaggy form of a great grizzly bear;
His little black eyes had lost all of their cunning,
And only a wild look of terror was there.

And after him followed, with much noise and crying,
A great many animals, some running near;
They came in great haste and they seemed to be flying
From something that caused them the greatest of fear.

The big horse went on, but his great sides were shaking,
And Little Chief saw, to his mighty surprise,
The horse was just laughing so hard he was making
The big tears of mirth run in streams from his eyes.

"To think, O, to think that they all should be flying
From that which they hear every day of the year;
For, Little Chief, hark! 'tis their own voices crying,
In echoes from caves of the canyon they hear.

"And now if you two will go carefully seeking
Among the great rocks of the high canyon wall,
Into all of the cracks and the dark caverns peeking,
You'll find what you've lost when you've searched
through them all."

So climbing and creeping and crawling and walking,
The two were soon making their way up the wall,
And at every cave they would hush from all talking
As Little Chief gave a loud cry and a call.

"HI!" he would call, and the answer came crying,
"HI!"—"Is the voice of the Coyote here?"
But always the echo that died away sighing
Seemed faintly to murmur, "No Coyote near."

And faint as the voices came back they were clearly
Not Brother Coyote's, his voice was not there;
He grew very tired and so mad that he nearly
Was tempted to pull Little Chief by the hair.

"I'm tired of your poor, little, weak, PALEFACE bawl-
ing;
Now listen to ME if you'd hear a REAL cry,"
And clearing his throat, he was very soon calling
So loudly he startled the eagles nearby.

But to their delight from the black cave came flying
The answering voices, a dozen or more,
And EACH WAS THE VOICE OF A COYOTE CRYING
In answer to him as he stood at the door.

He opened his mouth without waiting a minute;
Just opened it wide to its greatest extent,
And then in a second the voices were in it,
And into his throat with a rush they ALL went.

And then what a joyous jigging and dancing,
And yelping and howling and barking there was,
And Brother Coyote, in happiness prancing,
Rushed out of the canyon with never a pause.

He danced to the place where the big horse was grazing,
And shouted, "HI! YI! there!" right straight in his ear,
With all of his voices, a noise so amazing
The horse gave a jump and a great snort of fear.

And Little Chief saw as he came running nearer
The horse was so mad he grew red in the face,
And he seemed to grow smaller and redder and queerer,
Until in a moment he'd vanished in space.

Little Chief stopped, for his small knees were shaking;
He felt very queer, and he rubbed both his eyes;
It seemed to him now as if he were just waking,
And he stretched out his hands with a start of surprise;

For THERE WAS THE FIRE IN THE HOGAN, STILL GLOWING,
ANE THERE WAS HIS FATHER, and over his head,
On the tan of the buck-skin, he saw clearly showing
THE BIG REARING HORSE, painted plainly in red.

And out on the desert he heard a ki-yi-ing;
That filled all the night with a wonderful din,
And Little Chief smiled at the far-away crying;
"It's Brother Coyote," he thought with a grin.

* * * * *

And so when the mellow moon brightly is shining
If you hear far away on the chilly night air
A yelping and barking and singing and whining
That sounds like a dozen Coyotes out there,

You may know it is Brother Coyote, who's bringing
His voices to air in the yellow moonlight;
He is proud of their tones, and does all of his singing
In the long, quiet hours of the cool desert night.

The Medicine-Man

A MEDICINE-MAN I'm going to be
When I am grown, and you shall see
How I can shake the rattle,—SO!
And on my toes so softly go;
O, wouldn't you like to come and see
A medicine-man like I'm going to be?

A medicine-man I'm going to be,
And all the men shall come to me,
And ask advice and wisdom too,
And I shall tell them what to do;
O, don't you wish that you were me,
And wise as I am going to be?

Camp-Fire Tales

THE time I like of all the best
Is when the night
Throws a soft blanket o'er the west,
And then the light
Of our bright camp-fire flashes red,
In cheery blaze,
And old men tell, with nodding head,
Of other days.

"THE MEDICINE MAN"

Old Brother Fox

OLD BROTHER FOX has a raggedy tail
That drags on the ground when he runs;
He'll hunt for a rabbit o'er hill and o'er dale;
But he's dreadfully wary of guns.

"THE RUNNER"

The Runner

LONG before the horse or train
Rushed across the desert spaces;
Long before the Spaniard came;
Or the paler northern races;
O'er the trail through desert waste,
Head erect and free limbs swinging,
Came the runner swift, in haste;
Tidings from his brothers bringing.

And the runner still today
Brings the news of dance or races,
From the towns so far away
Where the white man leaves no traces,
And the trail he travels o'er
Is the same his early brothers,
In the centuries before,
Traveled with their news to others.

The Eagle

HIGH up in the canyon wall,
Where the rocks are dark and tall,
There the eagle builds his nest,
There he goes at night to rest.
In his feathered home so warm,
Sheltered safe from any harm,
Little eaglets snugly lie,
Waiting 'til they learn to fly.

Safe above the arrow's flight
They are hidden out of sight;
Where the only eye to see
Is the eagle's flying free
In great circles overhead,
Watching o'er their downy bed.
And the mother eagle, too,
Flying swiftly through the blue,

Keeps her eye upon her brood
As she looks about for food.
How the sunbeams from the west
Shine upon their wings and breast,
And how gracefully they flv
In wide circles in the sky!

The Harvest Dance

TO the pounding of the drum,
All the happy red-skins come;
Decked in feathers, gay and bright,
Shaking rattles—what a sight!
Feet begin to pat the ground;
Little red-skins leap around.

Fast and faster yet they leap,
Dancing 'til the sunbeams creep
Down upon the beaten floor
And the rattles shake no more;
Then the drums are silent, too,
And the harvest dance is through.

"THE FLUTE-SONG"

The Flute-Song

I DO not blame the little birds
For flying down so near;
I do not blame the little brook
For creeping close to hear;
The tiny specks of sunshine, too,
That flutter from the sky,
And drop in spots of golden light
Down through the leaves so green and bright,
And on the soft grass lie.

They come in answer to a voice
That seems a brother's call;
The flute-song that my father plays,
The sweetest song of all;
It brings the summer breezes back
Just as they thought to creep
To sunny lands so far away,
Where they could take a holiday,
And, drowsy, drop to sleep.

It sets the little aspen leaves
To dancing on the tree;
And starts my heart to singing
To the sweetest melody.
And even in my dreams at night
I hear the flute-song call,
So sweet and drowsy, low and clear,
It brings the woodland voices near,
And seems to sing them all.

COME, LITTLE SON OF MINE

The Spring

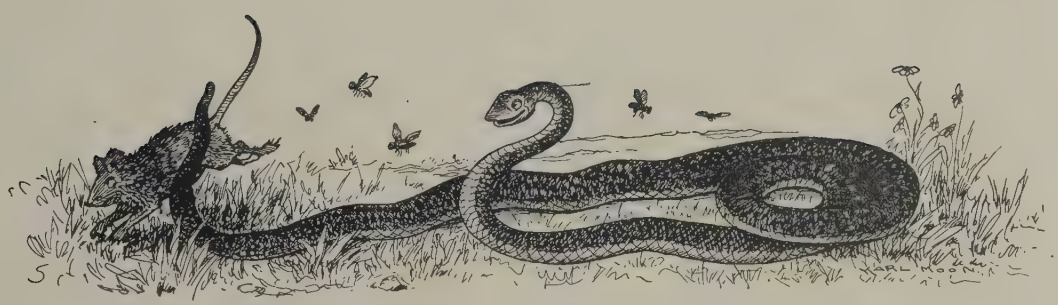
DOWN in the hollow it bubbles and calls;
Hark! Little son of mine, dost thou not hear?
Haste, for the shadow of evening falls,
And the call of the spring is loud and clear.

Haste! for thy father is coming soon,
And the meal in the bubbling pot is done;
But the jar is as dry as a summer noon,
And no one to fill it but us, my son.

"HASTE, FOR THE SHADOW OF EVENING FALLS"

Little Snake

WRIGGLE, wriggle, little snake;
Tell me what you eat.
"All the little mice and flies,
That I chance to meet."



The Harvest Dance of the Underground

OVER the top of a desert hill
The golden sand lay warm and still;
But down in the cool of the underground
Was stir and bustle and buzz of sound.
The field-mice came with their golden grain;
The prairie-dogs with long strips of cane;
Each animal brought as much as he could
Of what he thought was the choicest food.
There were melons and corn and nuts and beans,
And fruits and roots and the dewiest greens,
And the feast was spread with the greatest care
On the beaten floor of the big room, where
Later would sound the booming drum,
And the Harvest Dancers would gaily come
To bend and bow and leap and prance
In the whirling maze of the Harvest Dance.

* * * * *

And now they all sat down to the feast,
From big Brother Hare to the tiniest beast,
And Little Tee-wanna came rather late,
But he was hungry and greedily ate;
And he swallowed so fast he coughed and choked,
And the others mocked him and laughed and joked,
For Little Tee-wanna was called a clown;
He never was known to growl or frown,
But always smiled when the others sighed,
Or cheered them up when they sadly cried.
Little Tee-wanna a horned-toad was,
And body and head and tail and claws

Were colored with spots of brown and gray
Like the rocks and sands where he always lay.
Little Tee-wanna was quick as light,
And his tiny eyes were deep and bright,
And his ears were sharp, so he saw and heard
Every event that ever occurred,
From the smallest move to the tiniest sound
In this animal world of the underground.

* * * * *

But now that the feast was nearly through,
A noise was heard that was strange and new;
It came from the hole that was overhead,
That into the outdoor desert led;
And looking up in a sudden fright,
They saw a terrifying sight.
Two glaring eyes looked down within,
From a great gray face that was gaunt and thin,
And a huge mouth opened red and wide,
With rows of sharp white teeth inside,
And the Gray Wolf seemed of a terrible size,
As the room was filled with his hungry cries.
The prairie-dogs sat frozen still,
And Brother Hare looked pale and ill;
The field-mice chattered weak with fright
And the lizard quickly slipped from sight.
Only the Horned-toad smiling stood,
And he raised his voice as high as he could,
And shouted loud with a gleeful grin:
"Old Brother Wolf, come in, come in."
For well he knew that the hole was small
And the great Gray Wolf was broad and tall,
And he knew that his brothers were safe within,
So wider and merrier grew his grin.

The Gray Wolf pushed his big head through,
But his shoulders stuck and he angry grew;
He pushed and struggled and growled and choked
While the Horned-toad danced and laughed and joked
And kicked the dust in the Gray Wolf's eyes
And down his throat 'til he choked his cries,
And dancing, cautiously, very near
He stuck his nose with a cactus spear.
The Gray Wolf gave a roar of pain
And jerked his head through the hole again;
In a cloud of dust he rushed away
And no one saw him again that day.

* * * * *

And that is why, so the wise have told,
Little Tee-wanna was chosen of old,
When the great hide drums began to pound,
To lead the dance in the underground.

"THE NAVAJO SHEPHERD BOY"

The Navajo Shepherd-Boy

HIGH up on my mesa-land,
Where the world seems far away,
I can watch on every hand
If my sheep should chance to stray.

All the world is spread below:
Desert, plain, and purple hill.
Early spring and winter's snow
Always find me watching still.

With my little flock I go
Searching for the pasture best;
'Til our steps grow tired and slow,
And the sun sinks in the west.

Back then to our hogan home
Up upon the mesa steep,
And beneath the starry dome
I will sing my flock to sleep:

"From the east the shadows creep;
Bringing hours of rest and sleep
To my flock of weary sheep;
Rest, little sheep, rest.

"In the west the sun-god bright,
Draws his rays in for the night;
Peeping stars come into sight;
Rest, little sheep, rest.

"Safely by your shepherd led
To your soft and grassy bed;
With the dark sky overhead;
Rest, little sheep, rest."

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